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Small Briefing on 2 weeks update

[WCA]

12 April 1961

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(55) CUBAN OPERATION (Exhibit A)

1. ⁽¹³⁾ Orientation and Concepts ⁽⁷⁾ The present concept of the operation being mounted to overthrow Castro is that ^{it} should have the appearance of a growing and increasingly effective internal resistance, helped by the activities of defected Cuban aircraft and by the infiltration (over a period of time and at several places) of weapons and small groups of men. External support should appear to be organized and controlled by the Revolutionary Council under Miro Cardona as the successor to a number of separate groups. To support this picture and to minimize emphasis on invasion, the following steps have been taken:

a. The public statements of Cardona have emphasized that the overthrow of Castro was the responsibility of the Cubans, that it must be performed mainly by the Cubans in Cuba rather than from outside, and that he and his colleagues are organizing this external support free of control by or official help from the U. S. Government.

b. The plans for air operations have been modified to provide for operations on a limited scale on D_N¹2 and again on D-Day itself instead of placing reliance on a larger strike coordinated with the landings on D-Day.

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(11) c. Shortly after the first air strikes on D-2 a B-26 with Cuban pilot will land at Miami airport seeking asylum. He will state that he defected with two other B-26 pilots and aircraft and that they strafed aircraft on the ground before departing.

(11) d. A preliminary diversionary landing of true guerrilla type will be made in Oriente Province on D-2. The main D-Day landings will be made by three groups at locations spaced some distance apart on the coast. These will be followed about one week later by a further guerrilla type landing in Pinar del Rio (at the western end of the island).

(11) e. Ships carrying the main forces leave the staging base at staggered times. (The first one sailed on Tuesday ~~evening~~ morning.) They will follow independent courses to a rendezvous for the final run-in. Until nearly dusk on D-1 they would appear to air observation to be pursuing unrelated courses so there will be no appearance of a convoy.

(11) f. All the landings will be at night. At least in the first 24 hours, supply activity over the beaches will be at night. There will be no obtrusive "beachhead" to be seen by aircraft. Most troops will be deployed promptly to positions inland.

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(11) 2. The Time Table of the plan is as follows:

- (23) D_N⁻⁷:** Commence staging main force - staging completed night of D_N⁻⁵.
- D_N⁻⁶:** First vessel sails from staging area - last vessel departs early morning D_N⁻⁴.
- D_N⁻²:** B_N⁻²⁶ defection operation - limited air strikes.
- D_N⁻²:** Diversionary landing in Oriente (night D_N⁻³ to D_N⁻²).
- D-Day:** Main landings (night D_N⁻¹ to D_N⁰) - limited air strikes. Two B_N⁻²⁶s and liaison plane land on seized air strip.
- D to D+1:** Vessels return night of D to D+1 to complete discharge of supplies.
- D+7:** Diversionary landing in Pinar del Rio.

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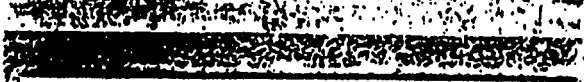
(11) 3. Diversion or Cancellation: It would now be infeasible to halt the staging and embarkation of the troops. In the event of a decision to modify the operational plan or to cancel the operation, ships will be diverted at sea, either to Vieques Island or to ports in the U.S. If cancellation is directed, the troops and ships' officers will be told that the reason for the diversion is that all details of the operation, including time and place of intended landings, had been blown to the Castro regime and that under these circumstances the landings would be suicidal. This explanation would be adhered to after the demobilization of the force in the U.S. The U.S. Government could take the position

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that this enterprise had been undertaken by the Cubans without U. S. Governmental support, that it had failed because of their poor security, and that the U. S. could not refuse to grant asylum to the Cuban volunteers. If by reason of either new intelligence or policy considerations it is necessary to effect a major change in the operational plan, it will be necessary to divert to Vieques Island so that officers of the brigade and ships' captains can be assembled and briefed on the new plan. (The advantages of this location are its security together with the opportunity for the troops to be ashore briefly after some days onboard ship.)

(11) 4. ⁽¹³⁾ Naval Protection: ⁽¹¹⁾ The ships carrying the main force will receive unobtrusive Naval protection up to the time they enter Cuban territorial waters. If they are attacked [they will be protected by U. S. Naval vessels but following such an intervention] they would be escorted to a U. S. port and the force would be demobilized.

(11) 5. ⁽¹³⁾ Defections: ⁽¹¹⁾ Every effort is being made to induce the defection of individuals of military and political significance. At the present time contact has been established by and through Cuban agents and anti-Castro Cuban groups with some thirty-one specific military and police officers, including [4 lines of source text not declassified].



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There are, of course, in addition many others rumored to be disaffected but to whom no channel of approach is available. The objective of these efforts is not to induce immediate defections but to prepare the individuals for appropriate action in place after D-Day.

⑪ 6. ^⑬ Internal Resistance Movements: ^⑦ On the latest estimate there are nearly 7,000 insurgents responsive to some degree of control through agents with whom communications are currently active. About 3,000 of these are in Havana itself, over 2,000 in Oriente, about 700 in Las Villas in central Cuba. For the most part, the individual groups are small and very inadequately armed. Air drops are currently suspended because available aircraft are tied up in the movement of troops from their training area to the staging base. After D-Day when it is hoped that the effectiveness of the Castro air force will be greatly reduced, it is planned to supply these groups by daytime air drops. Every effort will be made to coordinate their operations with those of the landing parties. Efforts will be made also to sabotage or destroy by air attack the microwave links on which Castro's communication system depends. The objective is of course to create a revolutionary situation, initially perhaps in Oriente and Las Villas Provinces, and then spreading to all parts of the island.

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(11) 7. ⁽¹³⁾ Propaganda and Communications: ⁽¹⁷⁾ Currently medium and short wave broadcasting in opposition to Castro is being carried on from seven stations in addition to Radio Swan. Antennae modifications of the latter have increased its effective power in Cuba and it is believed that there is now good medium wave reception of Swan everywhere except in Havana itself where it can still be effectively jammed. The number of hours of broadcasting per day will be increased beginning immediately from about 25 to almost 75 soon after D-Day. The combination of multiple long and short wave stations which will then be in use, supplemented by three boats which carry broadcasting equipment (two short wave and one medium wave) will assure heavy coverage of all parts of the island virtually at all times. Radio programs will avoid any reference to an invasion but will call for up-rising and will of course announce defections and carry news of all revolutionary action. Soon after D-Day a small radio transmitter will be put in operation on Cuban soil.

(11) 8. ⁽¹³⁾ The Political Leadership: ⁽¹⁷⁾ As of the present moment, the six members of Cardona's Revolutionary Council, notably including Ray, have reaffirmed their membership. Although no specific portfolios have been confirmed, the following possibilities are currently under discussion: Varona, Defense; Ray, Gobernacion (Interior); Carrillo, Finance;

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Hevia, State; Maceo, Public Health. The political leaders have not yet been briefed on the military plan but they will be informed at each phase of military operations. Advance consultation with the political leaders is considered unacceptably dangerous on security grounds and although last minute briefings will be resented, it is believed that the political leaders will want to take credit for and assume control as quickly as possible over these major operations against Castro. The present plan is that one of them (Arttime) will go into Cuba with the main force, others will follow as soon as possible after D-Day and they will announce the establishment of a Provisional Government on Cuban soil.

(11) 9. (B) Command: (11) Military command will be exercised in the name of the Revolutionary Council and later of the Provisional Government. In fact, however, the CIA staff constitutes the general staff of the operation and the Agency controls both logistics support and communications. Accordingly, in the early stages at least, the functions of a general headquarters will be exercised from the Agency with the Cuban brigade commander exercising field command over the units that land on D-Day.

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